

S. 112, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to strengthen benefits for children of Vietnam veterans born with spina bifida, and for other purposes

As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs on February 16, 2023

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2023	2023-2028	2023-2033
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	1	not estimated
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No
		Mandate Effects	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2034?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
* = between zero and \$500,000.			

S. 112 would require the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to conduct certain activities to support children of Vietnam veterans who are born with spina bifida. Spina bifida is a congenital condition in which the spine does not close completely, which can lead to severe neurological damage and mobility impairments. VA provides health care benefits, monetary allowances, and employment training to eligible children of Vietnam veterans born with spina bifida. In total, CBO estimates that implementing S. 112 would cost \$1 million over the 2023-2028 period; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

The bill would require VA to establish an advisory council to solicit feedback from covered children and veterans. Using information about the administrative costs of similar councils, CBO estimates that staff salaries, travel costs, and other expenses would be less than \$500,000 annually and total \$1 million over the 2023-2028 period.

See also

[CBO's Cost Estimates Explained](#), [CBO Describes Its Cost-Estimating Process](#), [Glossary](#)

S. 112 also would require VA to periodically report to the Congress on benefits it provides to children born with spina bifida and on matters related to its outreach to those children. Based on costs for similar reports, CBO estimates that satisfying those requirements would cost less than \$500,000 over the 2023-2028 period.

Finally, the bill would require VA to regularly contact Vietnam veterans' children who have spina bifida. In addition, VA would be required to treat and provide benefits for the entire lifetime of the child regardless of their marital status or whether their veteran parent is living. Under current law, VA has several outreach programs dedicated to providing access and information about benefits and services, and it provides treatment and services to those children as a life-long benefit. Because the department is generally satisfying those requirements under current law, CBO estimates that implementing those provisions would not significantly affect the federal budget.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Etaf Khan. The estimate was reviewed by Chad Chirico, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.



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